

Generation Y Perspectives



Meet *Garret, Kristen, Aaron and Nick*





***Our
friends
think that
we are
rocket
scientists
and
astronauts***

Because we work here



***But truthfully, we tend to work
just as much here.***



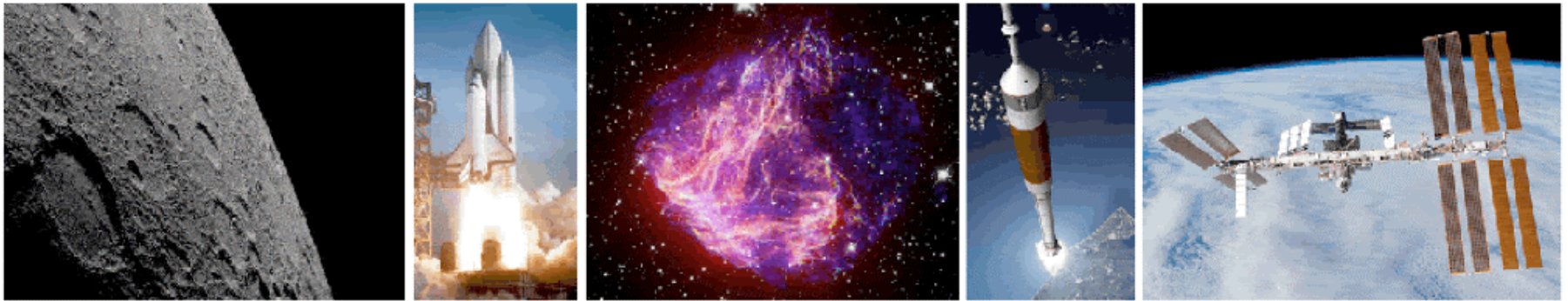
***Last week, we interacted with
people from here ...***



***... friends, family, classmates,
colleagues, even strangers.***

***They **all** wanted to know **more**
about what we do at NASA.TM***

So we got to thinking...



Why aren't **they** connected to NASA?

***Why isn't a **whole generation**
connecting to NASA?***

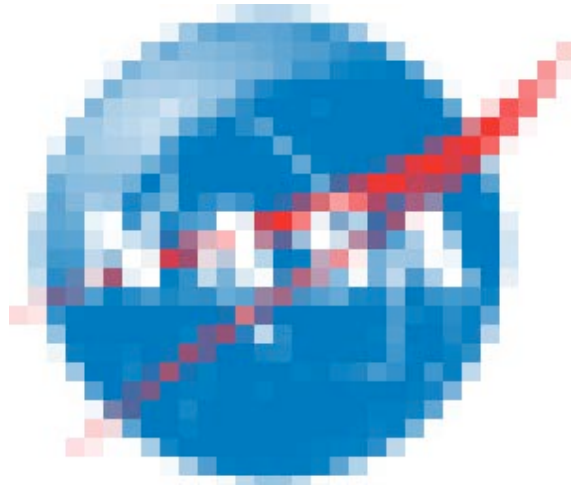
We are part of **Generation Y.**

***This presentation is our
perspective.***

(But keep in mind that our generation will be asked to pay the majority of the tax bill for the vision for space exploration)

*That's **\$124B** through the first lunar landing (FY06–FY18).*

NASA has a brand and a message.



We don't want to talk about that.

***We want to talk about why our
generation isn't **connecting** to it.***

*Because we **aren't** connecting to it...*

...young
people, both
inside and
outside of
NASA.



*And we think they SHOULD
connect to it.*

Because what NASA
does is **important**.

...to everyone.





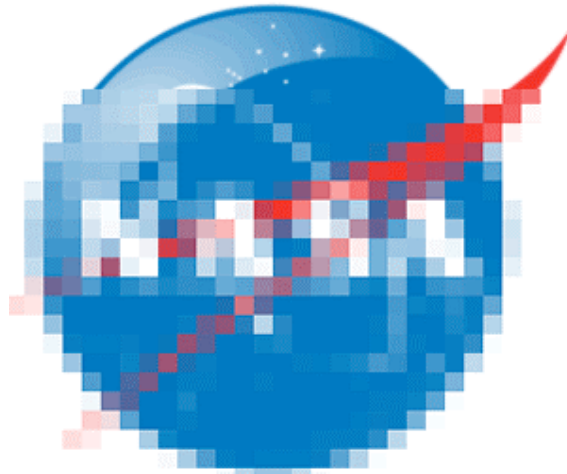
The world is **connected** today in ways
that are **shattering** traditional
communications concepts.



And NASA is in a position to
lead the world in exploring
new frontiers.

*Engaging people in this exploration
is not just an opportunity.*

It is a responsibility.



01 Connected Generation

The traditional concept of
top-down, one-way
communications strategy
is *dead*.

(It is **NOT** dying. It is *dead*.)

*Generation Y is a completely **new** generation.*



*Roughly speaking,
Generation Y is defined as -*

1977

< Birth Date >

2000

31

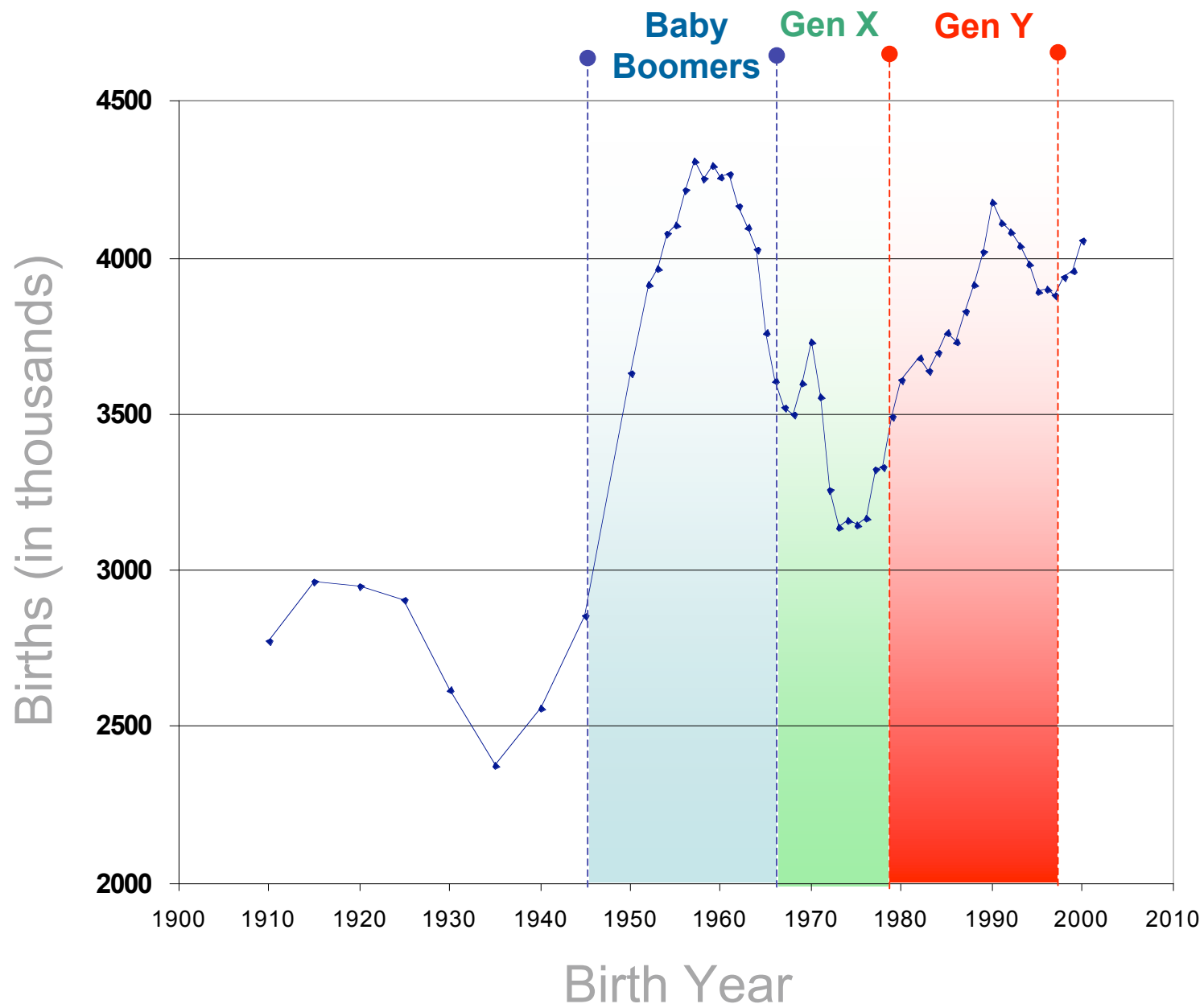
< Current Age >

8



**There are over 70 million people in the
U.S. belonging to our generation**

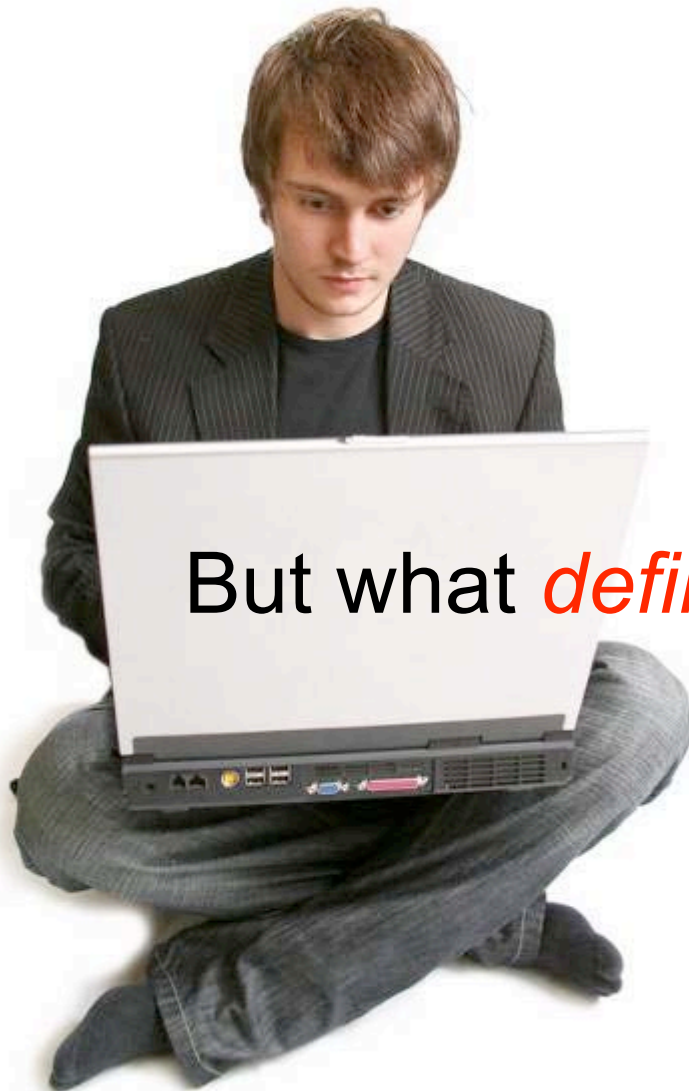
And just like the Baby Boomers, we are a large group of people that is **IMPACTING society**



Generation Y is currently 25% of the workforce

and is projected to be 47% of the workforce by 2014.

Is NASA ready?



But what *defines* Generation Y?

Likes mentors

Global

Instant information

Demands instant gratification

empowered

Wired

Expecting (NOW! Not 5 minutes from now)

Attracted to Large Social Movements

multi-tasking

Quickly bored

Mobile

Interdependent

Impatient if delayed... but highly adaptable.

**And there are a lot of things that
made us the way we are.**



***We were the first generation to grow up
with **cable** in our homes***

***...Studies say this leads to
shorter attention spans***

...And chronic **boredom**.

We are used to *DIVERSITY*

...after all, we grew up in diverse environments.



We grew up with

TALK SHOWS

And **REALITY TV.**



For our generation, TV is not passive
entertainment

it is an *interactive experience!*

And our **lives** and **outlooks** have been
shaped by this.

“Anyone can be a star ...”

“Everyone deserves to have their say.”

“Getting heard and having a say are not only easy, they seem natural.”

Wait! You just described my generation.



Maybe there are some similarities. But there are very important differences.



Such as different formative experiences.

Baby Boomers were shaped by:

Vietnam

The “Big Three” TV networks

The Cold War

The Kennedy and King Assassinations

Handicapped Rights

Civil Rights

The Feminist Movement

The Right to Privacy

Rock Music

And,

Gay Rights



Generation Y has been shaped by:

*Columbia
Accident*

The 2000 Election Crisis

Internet

Columbine

The Iraq War

9-11

Reality TV

Terrorism

Cell Phones

Starbucks

Cable

Gaming

And those life experiences made us:

Lack trust in corporations and government

Focus on personal success

Have a short-term career perspective

Gets easily bored

Extremely independent

See no clear boundary between work and life

Empowered and optimistic

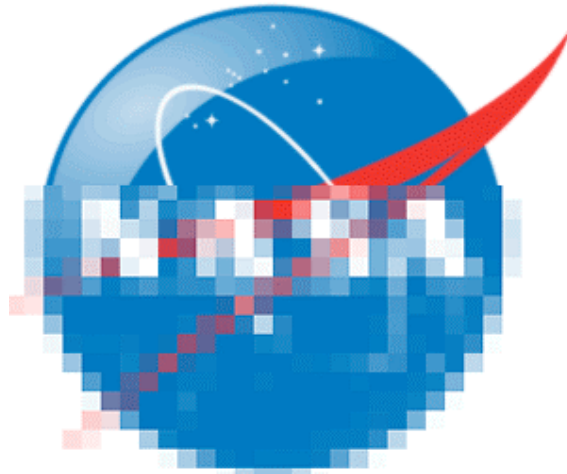
Sacrifice economic rewards for work-life balance

Expect to work anytime, anyplace

Connect with people in new and distinctive ways

Comfortable with globalization

Racially and culturally diverse



02 Perspectives

**As a whole, people of
Generation Y are **not**
interested in space
exploration.**

This is a **FACT**.

A **majority** of Gen Y between 18 and 24
Are **not aware** or **not engaged** in NASA's mission





Support is higher among Asian-Americans.

Forty percent oppose NASA's mission



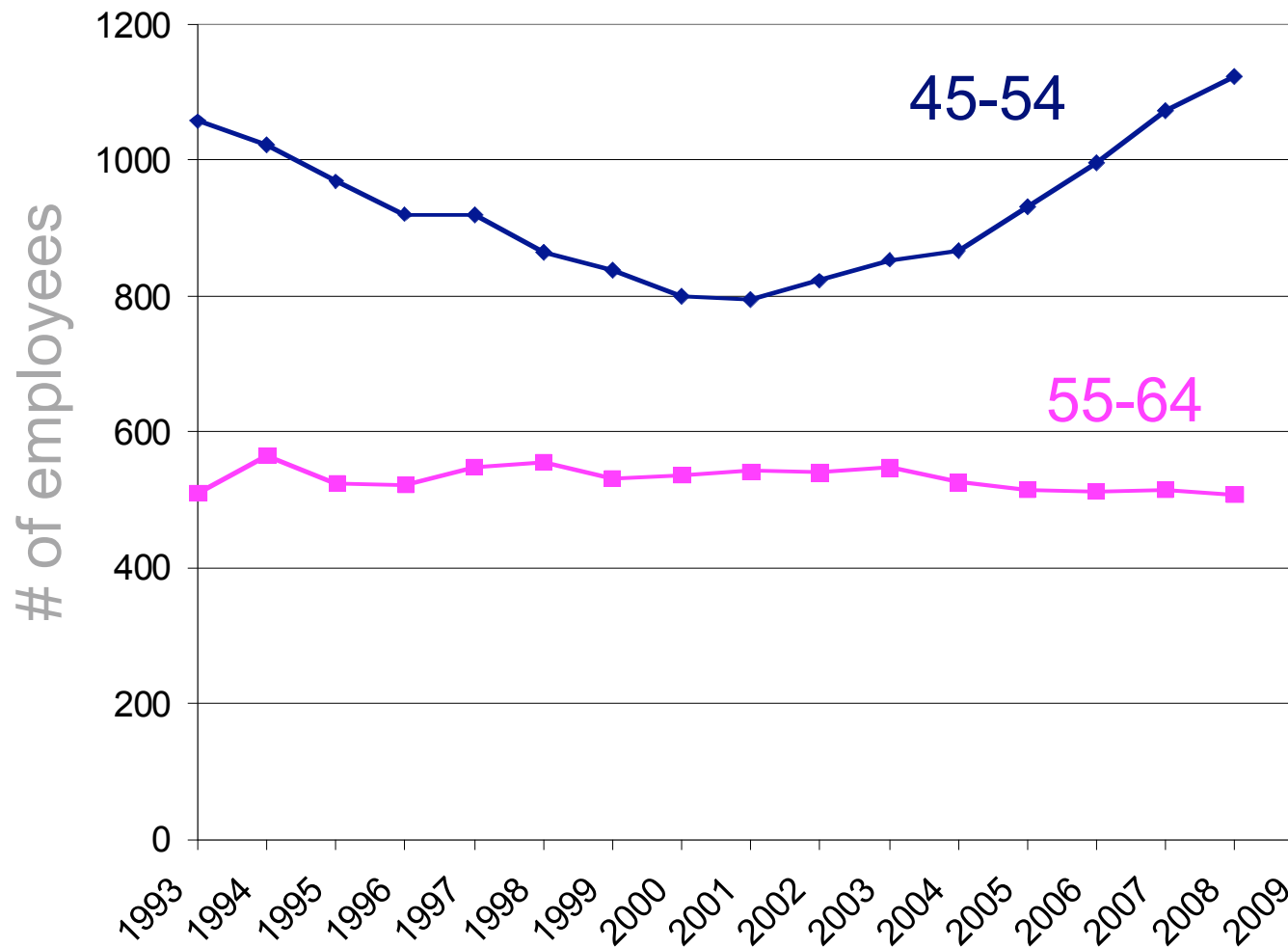
Opposition among Gen Y Hispanics is higher

39%

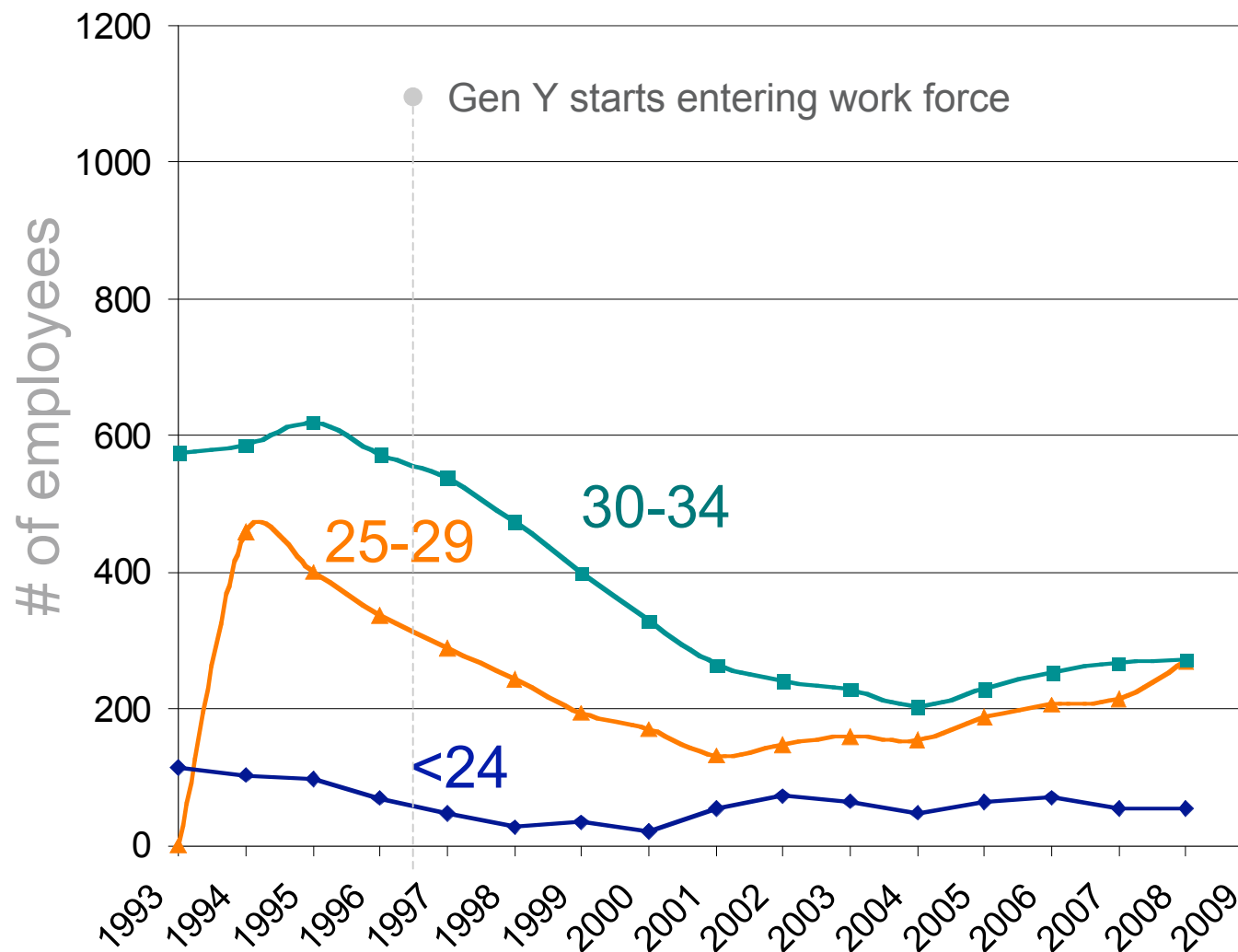
39% believe that nothing worthwhile has come out of NASA

***And maybe that's because
NASA is not engaging
Generation Y***

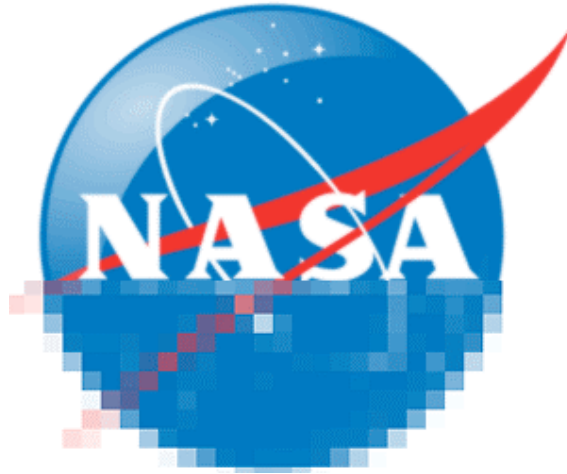
For example, here's the profile at **NASA Johnson Space Center** for the workforce ages 45-64...



... compare that with the profile of the younger workforce ages <34.



*If our generation is asked to pay the majority of the tax bill for the vision for space exploration, we need to be **engaged** in NASA's mission.*



03 Rules of Engagement

So how do you reach an
entire generation
with a brand and message?



First, better understand the audience

Then focus on getting us
interested again





**Our generation is not interested
because:**

We don't see the point.

We don't understand the facts.

We can't participate.

Instead of *telling* us what you want us to hear ...



**Facilitate a discussion with Gen Y and
allow us to participate in the NASA mission**



Share a **compelling story**





Touch our lives in
ways **familiar** to us.

Utilize “social media”



Spark conversations



But *please* be **timely**





**Reclaim an
image as a
*leader of
innovation.***

What would an **innovative, collaborative, participatory** NASA look like to us?

Here's a few possible future headlines.

“Explorers Hired: NASA's recruiting advantage”

“What My Teenager Taught NASA About Marketing”

“NASA uses social media to improve public image and reach target audiences”

“Open innovation leads to budget savings and improved reliability of Constellation spacecraft”

“2 million Digg votes for latest NASA press release”

“NASA flattens organization structure and improves innovation”

“NASA openness spins off into the first private spacecraft to land on the moon”

NASA employs the smartest engineers in the world to solve its toughest problems using collaborative innovation

Astronaut twitters from Space during EVA

“NASA enjoys increases visibility, credibility, and audience exposure”

“NASA uses persona based approach to tell its story”

“NASA switches back to Macs”

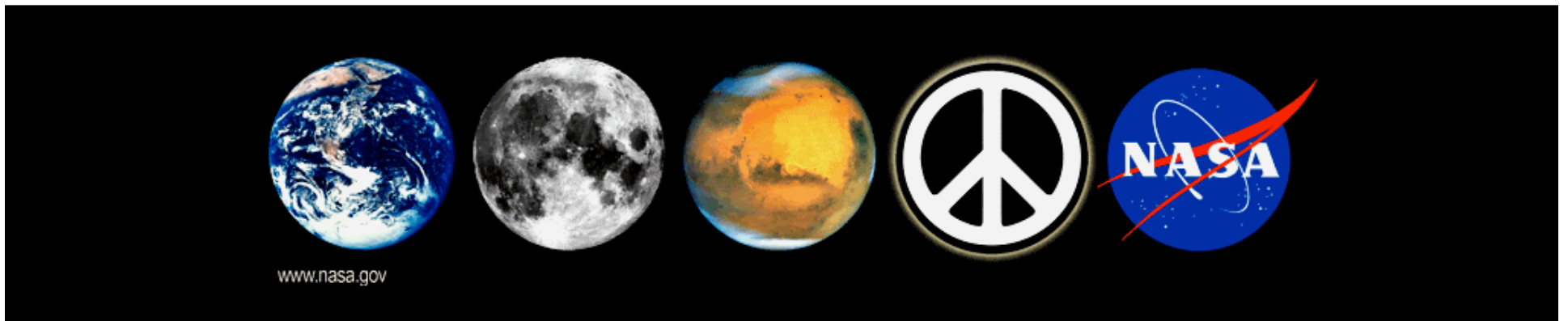
“Employees awarded with new incentives to innovate at NASA”

“Students from elementary school in Nebraska control Mars Rover from classroom”



*What does your **local Gen-Y'er** think about NASA's future?*

When we asked a local Gen-Y'er what she thought about this image:



she commented:

“Hey, that’d make a great T-shirt!”

We couldn't agree more!

**There are a number of things
that **NASA** is doing that are on
the right track!**

Centennial Challenges



facebook



04 The Challenge

By no means is this
“the answer”

**...after all, who are we
anyway?**

**Just some Gen Y-er's
who got hooked by the
NASA bug and want to
help.**

But we've done a lot in 4 months...

Co-op Alumni Mentoring

Spoke to several management teams about Gen Y (10+)

Created the Flat NASA Experiment Blog

Created the leadership forum

Inspired public regarding NASA careers using Facebook

Established connections at Rice University

Developed this presentation

Outreach. Lots of outreach

Developed Co-op Advanced Planning Team (CAPT)

Collaborated with Wired Magazine on Article Concept

Connected NASA to Twitter

Facilitated the JSC PAO New Media Project with CAPT

Led the planning of Yuri's Night Houston 08

With only 4
people.

**There isn't one ultimate
communications strategy to
solve NASA's problems
once and for all.**

...it'd be a lot easier if there was.

So the challenge is to take this and create new ideas.

Because the NASA we want to work for and connect to is like us:

A word cloud of adjectives arranged in a circular pattern. The words are: Collaborative (red), Timely (green), Innovative (blue), Purposeful (green), Exciting (purple), Connected (black), Participatory (red), Bold (grey), Open (black), and Creative (yellow-green).

Collaborative

Creative

Timely

Open

Innovative

Bold

Connected

Participatory

Exciting

Purposeful

**But we – our generation –
want to be a part of the
solution.**

Because space exploration is the future.

And it is OUR future.

Everyone's future.



References

- Center for Cultural Studies and Analysis. *American Perception of Space Exploration: A Cultural Analysis for NASA*. Philadelphia, PA: Center for Cultural Studies & Analysis, 2004.
- Hopkins, Robert. *Strategic Communications Framework: Implementation Plan*. Washington, DC: National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 2007.
- Space Foundation. Space Awareness Initiative. *America's Spacepoll: An Annual Research and Analysis Project*. Colorado Springs, CO: Space Foundation, 2000.
- Dittmar, Mary Lynne. Engaging the 18-25 Generation: Educational Outreach, Interactive Technologies, and Space. Dittmar Associates Inc. Houston, TX
- Smith, Tom. Trends in National Spending Priorities, 1973-2006. General Social Survey. National Opinion Research Center. University of Chicago
- NAS Insights. *Generation Y: The Millennials*. NASA, 2006.
- Kohut, Andrew. *How Young People View Their Lives, Futures and Politics, A Portrait of "Generation Next"*. The Pew Research Center, 2007
- Rasmus, Daniel W. The Next-Generation Workforce and Project Management. Academy Sharing Knowledge (ASK) Magazine, Fall 2007.
- NAS Recruitment Communications. *Generation Y. The Millennials* www.nasrecruitment.com/TalentTips/NASinsights/GenerationY.pdf, 2006
- Zelon, Barbara. *Conversation Constellation Strategies*. Houston, TX: National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 2007.
- Live Birth Data collected from <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0005067.html>.